

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have studied the Advisory Action dated April 7, 2009, and have made amendments to the claims. It is submitted that the application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. By virtue of this amendment, claims 1 to 109 remain in the application. Claims 1 to 6, 10 to 21, 24 to 29, 40 to 60, 65 to 67, 70 to 72, 75 to 77, 80 to 82, 85 to 87, 90 to 92, and 95 to 97 are subject to examination. Claims 1 and 15 have been amended. Claims 7 to 9, 22, 23, 30 to 39, 61 to 64, 68, 69, 73, 74, 78, 79, 83, 84, 88, 89, 93, 94, and 98 to 109 have been withdrawn from examination.

Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the final Office Action, the Examiner rejected the pending claims for various reasons. Responses to these rejections were contained in the after-final amendment filed on March 25, 2009, which responses are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. To avoid repetition, the instant Preliminary Amendment will not repeat any unchanged argumentation but, nonetheless, remains to obviate the respective rejections.

The remaining issues, in summary, relate only to claims 1 and 15. More specifically, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated that:

the deletion of "substantially" [in the phrase "substantially reverse mirror symmetrical"] does not simplify matters because **while it is quite clear what Applicants mean by the terminology**, it does not limit prior art from being interpreted on the claims when portions of a support member are indeed reverse mirror symmetrical extending from a midpoint. Applicants['] disclosure define[s] basically an equal length extending from the midpoint to be reverse mirror symmetrical such that the entire length of the support can define reverse mirror symmetrical. The Examiner notes that the claims are not limited to an entire length of a support member because although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims.

(Emphasis added by applicants.) Applicants agree with the Examiner that the term "reverse mirror symmetrical" is "quite clear" -- by its own terminology, with respect to its definition in the specification, and with respect to its use in the application. But, applicants also believe that

the term, as used and defined, *already includes* the length of the support member as part of the “reverse mirror symmetrical” character of the support member. This conclusion is consistent not only with the drawing figures showing the support member, but it is also consistent with the way the support member is described in the specification. Therefore, by adding wording to this effect in the claims, applicants believe that the Examiner’s concerns can be addressed without limiting the claims in any way -- in particular, without narrowing the scope of the claims in a way that affects the Doctrine of Equivalents. As such, for clarification only, applicants have amended claims 1 and 15 to indicate that the support member has a length and that the support member is reverse mirror symmetrical with respect to the length. These changes are believed to overcome the Examiner’s concerns.

Further, applicants respectfully believe that none of the prior art references cited in the final Office action have “portions of a support member [that] are indeed reverse mirror symmetrical extending from a midpoint” as alleged by the Examiner. In fact, the Examiner has not cited any prior art reference containing a reverse mirror symmetrical portion in a way that satisfies the Examiner’s burden of showing that “**each and every element** as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987); *see also In re Schreiber*, 128 F.3d 1473, 1477 (Fed. Cir. 1997), and *Brown v. 3M*, 265 F.3d 1349, 1351 (Fed.Cir.2001). Accordingly, with the entry of the instant amendments, claims 1 and 15 will be allowable.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that no reference shows or suggests the features of claims 1 or 15. Claims 1 and 15 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. Claims ultimately dependent on any of claims 1 or 15 are believed to be patentable as well due to their respective dependencies.

CONCLUSION

The remaining cited references have been reviewed and are not believed to affect the patentability of the claims as amended.

In this Response, Applicants have amended certain claims. In light of the Office Action, Applicants believe these amendments serve a useful clarification purpose, and are desirable for clarification purposes, independent of patentability. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claim amendments do not limit the range of any permissible equivalents.

Applicants acknowledge the continuing duty of candor and good faith to disclosure of information known to be material to the examination of this application. In accordance with 37 CFR §1.56, all such information is dutifully made of record. The foreseeable equivalents of any territory surrendered by amendment are limited to the territory taught by the information of record. No other territory afforded by the doctrine of equivalents is knowingly surrendered and everything else is unforeseeable at the time of this amendment by the Applicants and their attorneys.

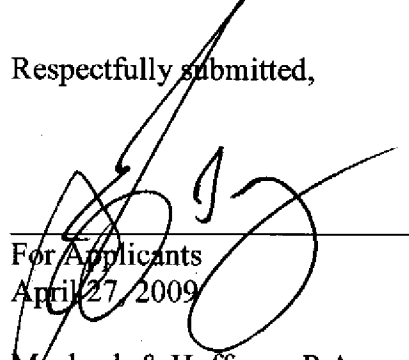
Applicants respectfully submit that all of the grounds for rejection stated in the Examiner's Office Action have been overcome, and that all claims in the application are allowable. No new matter has been added. It is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully requested.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Please charge other fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Mayback & Hoffman, P.A., No. 503,836.

PLEASE CALL the undersigned if discussion would expedite the prosecution of this application or in the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, in which case, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicants
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